

# VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

OCTOBER 2006

TWO DOLLARS







Colonel W. Gerald Massengill

Interim Director

Since joining the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries as Interim Director in May 2005, I have had the pleasure of getting to know the people who work so hard to fulfill the agency's mission. In the last year and a half, during this time of transition, the Department has accomplished much.

From the eradication of zebra mussels, to the acquisition of two new impressive Wildlife Management Areas, to the ongoing commitment to promote safe boating and other outdoor activities, the work the Department does to protect the Commonwealth's wildlife and natural resources has astounded me. With such a broad range of responsibilities, that touch every Virginian whether they hunt, fish, boat, or simply enjoy watching birds at their feeders, the Department's mission is vital and ever-changing, and filled with challenges. It not only takes committed employees, but also your support, to continue moving this agency forward in its role as a leader in fisheries and wildlife management. I foresee a bright future for this Department and for all Virginians who enjoy the great outdoors.

As I conclude my tenure here, and get back to my favorite fishing hole in Dinwiddie County, I am proud to have been a part of this great group of people. Not only have I made some true friends, but I've also had the opportunity to see stewardship and conservation work



**Colonel W. Gerald Massengill (left) and Ed Clarke, President of The Wildlife Center of Virginia, prepare to release a fully rehabilitated bald eagle, the symbol of American freedom and bravery, back to the wild along the James River.**

from inside the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, which has been a real education. As I head out to enjoy the outdoors, I will be taking some great memories with me.

#### Mission Statement

To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth; to provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation; to promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing.

*Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Natural Resources*

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Timothy M. Kaine, Governor

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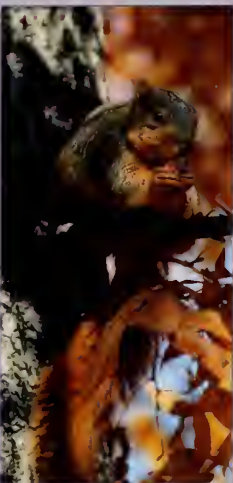
*Virginia Wildlife* (ISSN 0042 6792) is published monthly by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Send all subscription orders and address changes to *Virginia Wildlife*, P. O. Box 7477, Red Oak, Iowa 51591-0477. Address all other communications concerning this publication to *Virginia Wildlife*, P. O. Box 11104, 4010 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23230-1104. Subscription rates are \$12.95 for one year, \$23.95 for two years; \$2.00 per each back issue, subject to availability. Out-of-country rate is \$24.95 for one year and must be paid in U.S. funds. No refunds for amounts less than \$5.00. To subscribe, call toll-free (800) 710-9369. Postmaster: Please send all address changes to *Virginia Wildlife*, P.O. Box 7477, Red Oak, Iowa 51591-0477. Postage for periodicals paid at Richmond, Virginia and additional entry offices.

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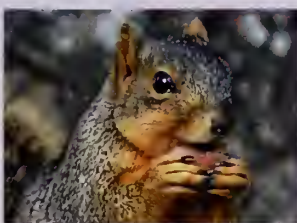
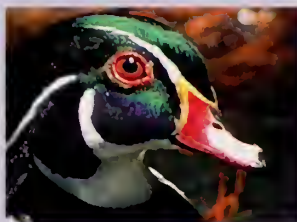


## About the cover:

The eastern fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger vulpinus*) is the only legally hunted fox squirrel in the state and is found west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is one of three very unique populations of fox squirrels that live in Virginia. The

other two are the southern (*Sciurus niger niger*), which is less common and found in the Piedmont region, and the Delmarva fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger cinereus*), a federally endangered species with the only known population in Virginia located on the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. Wildlife biologists are currently conducting a study on southern fox squirrels to better understand their range and habitat needs.

©Lloyd B. Hill



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# Ocean-Run Stripers



*The remarkable comeback of striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay has created an angling mecca that is drawing worldwide attention.*

story and photos  
by Marc N. McGlade

**T**here are few things as satisfying to an angler as brawling with a striped bass in late fall. Virginia is the hub of primo coastal striped bass angling, most notably in the Virginia Beach vicinity.

Call them stripers, linesides, linesiders or rockfish—anglers travel

from many states to test their skills against one of the Chesapeake's and Atlantic's finest species in one of the nation's best haunts for these gallant fighters. In fact, striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) in the Chesapeake Bay have been the target of anglers, both recreational and commercial, since colonial times.

The striped bass habitat and range stretches along the western At-



Atlantic coast from the St. Lawrence River in Canada to the St. Johns River in Florida. Strippers also inhabit Lake Pontchartrain in Louisiana. In addition, they have successfully been introduced along the Pacific Coast and to inland reservoirs and lakes nationwide. This species is classified as an anadromous fish, meaning it migrates from salt water to fresh water during the spawning season. North

**Justin Wilson, of Virginia Beach, poses with a typical late fall Chesapeake Bay striper. Giant ball jigs, crankbaits, top-water plugs and fresh bait work very well for striped bass in late fall and early winter.**

of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, some striped bass stocks participate in coastal migrations, whereby they travel north in the summer and south during the late fall and winter.

Striped bass are nocturnal feeders and considered photophobic (an abnormal sensitivity to light); they bite best under a gunmetal sky. In fact, experts say the nastier and colder the weather, the better stripers will bite.

Stripers can appear to be light green, olive, steel blue, brown or black. Their moniker originates from the seven or eight continuous stripes that mark their silvery sides. These stripes extend from the gills to the tail. Their undersides are usually white or silver, with a brassy iridescence.

Mature specimens can grow very large. Virginia's current state-record landlocked striper (caught at Leesville Reservoir) tipped the scales at 53 pounds, 7 ounces, and the salt-water record is a 68-pound, 1-ounce mammoth caught just south of Sandbridge. Their fighting ability is duly noted, as once hooked they challenge the most skilled angler to a street fight.

Researchers say that life for the striped bass begins in the estuary; at one time, the Chesapeake Bay was the spawning ground for nearly 90 percent of the Atlantic population. The migratory behavior of coastal striped bass is far more complex than that of many other anadromous fish, which spend most of their adult lives in the ocean, but migrate into rivers and streams to spawn. Their seasonal movements depend on age, sex, degree of maturity and the river in which they were born.

Experts say mature striped bass begin to move from the ocean into tidal freshwater to spawn by late winter. An increase in water temperature signals to stripers that the time is now to make babies. Spawning in the Chesapeake Bay generally takes place during April, May and early June, depending on the location within the giant estuary. Shortly after spawning, mature fish return to the coast. Most spend summer and early





fall months in New England's near-shore waters. In late fall and early winter, they migrate south like snowbirds and hunker down along the Virginia and North Carolina coasts.

### ***Stripers Don't Believe in Dieting***

According to fisheries biologists, larval stripers feed on zooplankton, while juveniles eat insect larvae, larval fish, mayflies, mysids (shrimp-like crustaceans) and amphipods (tiny scavenging crustaceans that lack a carapace and have laterally flattened bodies). Adults are piscivorous, or fish-eaters. In summer and fall, stripers consume Chesapeake Bay anchovy and Atlantic menhaden; in winter, they eat larval and juvenile spot and even Atlantic croaker; and in spring, they pounce on white perch, alewives and blueback herring. They devour almost any kind of small fish as well as several invertebrates, particularly crabs and squid.

### ***Habitat***

Estuaries are vital to the life cycle of striped bass—and there is none more important than the Chesapeake Bay—which use them as spawning grounds and nurseries. Mature stripers live in and around inshore habitats as well, including areas near sandy beaches and along rocky shorelines, in shallow water or deep trenches, and in rivers and the open Chesapeake Bay. Stripers also inhabit coastlines of the Atlantic Ocean during migratory periods, such as late fall and winter. Significant habitat alterations have the potential to disrupt striped bass life cycles.

### ***The Chesapeake Bay***

Among the best saltwater locations that Virginia avails to striper anglers is the Chesapeake Bay and especially the Bay Bridge-Tunnel (CBBT). An engineering marvel, the CBBT spans 17.6 miles connecting Virginia's Eastern Shore to the main-

**Above: Bring an oversized landing net when fishing for stripers during the late season run. Right: Fly-fishing is a very productive method to catch stripers around the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Lower right: Captain Steve Wray looks for great topwater action early and late in the day.**

land of Tidewater and Virginia Beach. This series of bridges, tunnels (known locally as "tubes"), causeways and artificial islands is one of the greatest man-made fishing structures the world over. Stripers, gray trout, cobia, flounder, red drum, black drum, spadefish, croaker, bluefish and others visit this immense structure throughout the year. Anglers catch many other species here, too. However, late fall and early winter is striper time in this fish-rich region.

There are four artificial islands separating tunnels from bridges at the CBBT; they are comprised of giant boulders that jut skyward from the water. The concrete columns that serve as the bridge's trestles look like



a giant centipede. For blue-water stripers chasers, it does not get much better than fishing along the CBBT.

Although some stripers live in the Bay all year, late fall and early winter is the time for giants. These migratory monsters return from Yankee Territory in November and December, setting the stage each year for explosive action for hook-and-line striper anglers in the know.

This is not from the "this-just-in news department." Experienced anglers revel at this time of year, anticipating the arrival of monster ocean-run linesiders. Their excitement is for good reasons, as the Bay consistently yields quantity and quality stripers to anglers searching for their quarry. Common sights and sounds this time of year are a doubled-over rod and a singing drag.

## Striper Tactics

When searching for stripers in the fall, charter captains up and down the Bay recommend visitors to the area to follow the birds. Birds provide the crystal ball to locating stripers. One tactic to try is using light tackle, essentially freshwater bass-fishing tackle, and use lures that mimic what the birds are feeding upon. If birds are active, stripers will attack red-and-white colored Mirr-Olure Top Dog topwater baits in the 3/4-ounce size. Rat-L-Traps in 3/4- or 1-ounce versions, again in red-and-white patterns, can hoodwink linesiders for small-boat owners de-

# Striper Specifics

♦ A quality map is ADC's *Waterproof Chartbook of the Chesapeake Bay*, 8th Edition, phone (888) 420-6277, e-mail gmco@adelphia.net, Web site [www.gmcomaps.com](http://www.gmcomaps.com).

♦ For a listing of available charter boat captains serving the Chesapeake Bay and Outer Banks fishing community, visit [www.vbsf.net](http://www.vbsf.net). To contact Capt. Steve Wray, call (757) 481-7517, e-mail captstv@yahoo.com or visit his Web site at [www.longbay-pointebaitandtackle.com](http://www.longbay-pointebaitandtackle.com).

♦ Virginia Marine Resources Commission, phone (757) 247-2200, Web site [www.mrc.state.va.us](http://www.mrc.state.va.us); Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament, phone (757) 491-5160, e-mail mrcswt@visi.net; Virginia Beach Visitor Information Center, phone (800) VA-BEACH; City of Virginia Beach general information, Web site [www.vbgov.com](http://www.vbgov.com).

♦ The fall Chesapeake Bay striper season stretches from October 4 through December 31, with a possession limit of two per person, measuring at least 18 inches in length with a maximum of 28 inches. One of the two fish in possession may be 34 inches or larger; however, no fish may be kept be-

tween 28 and 34 inches. Virginia's coastal season runs from January 1 through March 31, with a possession limit of two per person, measuring at least 28 inches in length. The size and possession limits of all saltwater species in Virginia are subject to change monthly; therefore, anglers should check current regulations frequently either by calling the Virginia Marine Resources Commission or visiting their Web site.

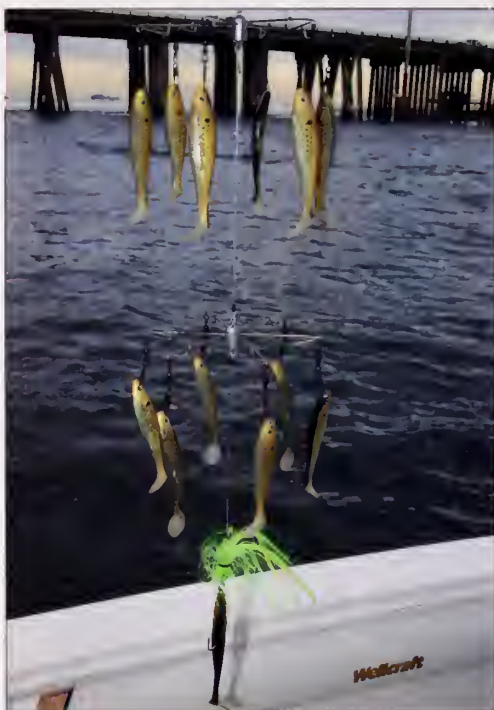
♦ Nearby launch sites for fishing the CBBT include: Owl's Creek in Rudee Inlet; Seashore State Park at the end of 64th Street; Lynnhaven Boat Ramp and Beach Facility in Lynnhaven Inlet, phone (757) 460-7590 and Kiptopeke State Park on the Eastern Shore.

♦ For questions concerning inland striped bass regulations or other angling-related inquiries, contact VDGIF at (804) 367-1000, or go online at [www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov).

♦ The weather in late fall or early winter can be very nice in Virginia Beach; however, it can also be cold, rainy and windy. Dress accordingly, and **always** wear a personal flotation device.







**Top:** You have to get down to where the fish are says Steve Wray. This often takes big baits, with lots of weight. **Above:** Trolling with an umbrella rig resembles a large school of baitfish moving through the water. Stripers find these complex lures hard to resist in the fall. Just about any big minnow or baitfish-imitating lure can be effective during the colder months.

siring to cast to them, instead of trolling. Another good choice is a blue or black back and silver-sided

Rebel Windcheater Minnow. The surface baits are most effective when fished against the rocks of any of the four islands.

On cloudy days, stripers tend to stay near the surface longer than on sunny days. On a clear day, stripers will move down the water column (sound) and that requires targeting them in deeper water.

Although the average striper measures 20 to 24 inches in length from October through mid-November, the bruisers start to appear from that point forward. The average quickly skyrockets to around 28 to 34 inches in the lower Bay and CBBT area before Thanksgiving.

The majority of bigger fish tend to locate away from the Small Boat Channel later in the fall. To locate more and bigger fish, try targeting

saltwater and freshwater fishing guide, stripers sound during the day, but they surface big time at night. That is one of Clark's favorite times to fish for stripers.

"If I get out there in the early evening and fish into the night, I'll start off with a fly rod," the Virginia Beach native says. "Anywhere along the four islands where the lights are shining down onto the water is a good place to fish after dark, even in late fall or winter. Before dark, though, the fly rod is tough to beat where the rocks come off the tube (tunnel) side of each island. You can anchor here and cast with the current towards the rocks with the long rod. I like dark-colored Clouser Minnows (and Lefty's Deceivers) on a sinking line. You've got to get the Clouser down a bit to the stripers."



the stretch from the fourth island north to High Level Bridge.

The Inner Middle Ground Area can be very good, too, but with current created by an outgoing tide and any type of easterly wind, it can be dangerous due to the swells, particularly for small boats. Shoals are present here and the average depth is only 9 to 12 feet. When the swells aren't too big, this area can be exceptional for linesiders.

According to Jim Clark, a former

Steve Wray, another Virginia Beach native and charter captain, agrees with Clark that nighttime fishing is effective. However, he mainly employs open-water trolling tactics from November through January. He says stripers will begin to school heavily during this time.

"Good lure choices for trolling are Mann's Stretch 25, Mann's Stretch Imitator, Storm WildEye Swim Shad, Calcutta Flashfoil Swim Shad or Tsunami Pro Swim Baits," Wray advises.



During the late fall and early winter, Wray uses a three-way swivel or an umbrella rig. When the jumbos arrive in November, he begins to troll with Stretch 30s, Mojo rigs and large ball jigs that resemble something from a duckpin bowling lane. Wray's largest striper pulled down the scale to the 55-pound mark, so he knows how big fish think.

Just like freshwater tidal large-mouth bass, striper-fishing results are optimum during an outgoing tide. They bite on a rising tide, too, but the majority of the charter boat captains in the region consider falling water the best condition.

"Fishing around the rocks at the islands are must-stop spots to try, especially where the tube enters the water as opposed to the bridge side of the islands," Clark says. "The waves

There is good news for the boatless striper angler in Virginia Beach. Wading around the Lesner Bridge at the mouth of Lynnhaven Inlet can be excellent in November and throughout the cold-weather months. Anglers can park their vehicles at the Lynnhaven Boat Ramp and Beach Facility and hoof it down to the water's edge and either wade or cast from shore. Local experts contend that nighttime is the best.

"One of the very best lure choices at the Lesner Bridge is a 2-ounce, round-head jig tipped with a 6-inch Zoom Salty Super Fluke in a bubblegum color," Wray says. "A ¾- or 1-ounce Rat-L-Trap also works well."

Baitfish wash in and out from Lynnhaven Inlet, and provide Lesner Bridge stripers with a nightly seafood buffet. Anglers who join them are in for a treat.



Surface plugs, stretch crankbaits and other artificial lures catch their share of Chesapeake Bay stripers late in the fall and early winter. When the action gets hot try using lures with a single hook. It's safer for the fish and angler.

Another proven technique in the fall is to bump the CBBT pilings with large, plastic-lipped lures that dive 20 feet or less. If they will not bite a jigged Sassy Shad or Rat-L-Trap, try bumping the pilings by trolling along the legs.

## It's A Wrap

The Chesapeake Bay and CBBT is a mecca for stripers each fall and winter—there are plenty of giants ransacking bait and wreaking havoc on prey throughout the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean. Every year from October through December, and even into January, this region is outstanding for stripers, linesides, linesiders, rockfish or any other name that comes to mind. Follow these tips and tricks and you can avoid your one-way ticket to Skunksville. Do not pass up your chance to do battle with a Chesapeake monster. □

*Marc N. McGlade is a writer and photographer from Midlothian. Marc has been a regular contributor to Virginia Wildlife since 1998, and likes casting for stripers throughout the year.*



**The author admires a nice striper caught in the late fall along the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Anglers have found that jigging around the bridge pylons and casting crankbaits or topwater lures around the rock covered islands to be very productive. The size of the striped bass tend to get larger as the season gets colder.**

crash heavily against the rocks—more noticeably on outgoing tide—sweeping bait near the structure as the stripers lie in wait."

The funky thing about linesiders is their preference for water depth. It can be a tough nut to crack until an angler can pattern their whereabouts.

"One minute they're on the surface, the next on the bottom," Wray adds. "When trolling, it's very important to follow the birds, look for bait and watch the sonar unit for bottom contour changes. When it's important to keep trolled baits near the bottom, using wire line or braided line helps a great deal."





# Treasures In Wood

*Eighty-two-year-old Tom Mayes has seen a lot of good and bad things in his lifetime. Now in his twilight years he envisions making art out of wood.*

story and photos  
by Emily M. Grey

The pleasant scent of fresh shaven wood permeates an artisan's studio. His "Kuntry Kabin" sign reads custom carving, working studio, gunstocks, wildfowl, fish, scrimshaw, signage and leather. These art forms, ship replicas, and rarities are among the varied commissioned pieces that 82-year-old Tom Mayes masters from his "Happy Seat" in Isle of Wight County.

"I love it all," the self-taught carver explains. "This is my life. People come here with things they can't get done anywhere else. We sit down and talk. It's their idea. I just make their creation happen for them."

Dried tobacco, deer hides and cotton dangle above a cannon, nautical rig and bugling elk, bear and turkey etched gunstocks in the front room of his wife and mother-in-law's former antique business. A life-size photograph of Beulah the cow, named for Mayes's grandmother, oversees this ole curiosity shop.



In the backroom, a suspended Model T Ford engine, waterfowl mounts and other paraphernalia adorn a crowded yet organized workroom. A black-capped chickadee perched atop a sunflower is almost ready for his son's birthday.

Born in Hillsborough, North Carolina, and reared in nearby Salisbury, Mayes began whittling at age 10. "My father took away my knife a few times because I cut my fingers," he recalls.

The first item the youngster carved was a feathered Indian head. The camp supervisor and trainer, a full-blooded Cherokee Chief, taught this Eagle Scout how to live off the land and many unforgettable lessons. The artist's Native American

headdresses and leather creations and carved plaque for the present day Nansemond tribe are heartfelt. And, he continues to sculpt Eagle Scout badges.

At 12, this wholesome, independent farm boy helped support himself by shearing sheep, picking cotton and delivering groceries. When World War II commenced, Mayes was selected to leave N.C.

State (University now) to work as an apprentice draftsman in the Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Virginia. There he met his gracious wife, Mildred.

Impassioned to serve his country, Mayes raised cane until the U.S. government sent him on an LCI (landing craft infantry) to the Europe and Pacific Theaters. After a 20-year career with the U.S. Navy, this architect and

**Left: Self-taught carver Tom Mayes crafts a black-capped chickadee carving for his son's birthday. In the early 70s Tom took to carving birds, fish and other wildlife. His knack for carving has also brought about other unique items, that include a special walking cane for a friend and fellow veteran that depicts military events from World War II, gunstocks and even scrimshaw reproductions that capture a bit of old maritime history.**







Tom Mayes works his art wizardry at his Kuntry Kabin, which is located at 17466 Benns Church Blvd. in Smithfield. Formerly an antique shop, of his wife and mother-in-law, this local landmark now houses Tom's carving studio and gallery.



There is lots to see and do at the Kuntry Kabin.



Above: After catching and releasing what many would consider to be a "fish of a lifetime," Roger Herring asked Tom if he would carve him a replica of his trophy striped bass. Tom accepted the challenge and spent the next year working on the fish.

his wife traveled in their motor home to East Coast art shows and museums. The Back Bay Wildfowl Show especially inspired the budding craftsman.

"You look like you're about to die

to get into this stuff," a bird carver said to him.

In 1975, Mayes took a flying leap into wildfowl carving and other mediums. Pleased customers spread the news of his amazing talent. For this gentleman is not another wood carver. He is one-of-a-kind. His love, respect and appreciation for nature shines through his anatomically correct work.

Roger Herring did not have the heart to claim the beautiful, 48-inch



striped bass he had caught, so he tossed the specimen, oozing with eggs, back into the Atlantic. In a year, Mayes had crafted a 54-inch saltwater striper from a photograph of Herring's prized catch. Noting every facet, he meticulously spent 30 minutes carving each of the 4,230 scales from the tupelo log. He also sculpted two American eels swimming within reach of the fish's open mouth. The jubilant angler had only asked for a simple replica.



"He studies his subject in-depth and is extremely detailed and methodical to the nth degree," says Herring about Mayes. "He's the last of the Mohicans. I know no one as meticulous, particularly at his age."

"It's more than work," he adds. "It's about his love of nature and desire to do things for people."

Another unusual creation is a coffee table called "Ebb and Flow." Dr. Michael E. Moreland requested that this item depict creatures found in his backyard. A plumed snowy egret, diamondback terrapin, bullfrog, fiddler crab, croaker, blue crab and other wildlife define this lovely furniture.

"He is a throw back to the times of pure craftsmanship," says Dr.

Mayes's "majestic" Canada goose carving entitled, "On Guard." "He has fixed pipes for my husband, made a tobacco box, and carved a unique remembrance cane. His talent is awesome."

As he toils, Mayes compiles a written explanation and step-by-step photographic ledger illustrating how the item was constructed. When his product is completed, the artist hands this portfolio to his client.

"If I get tired working on something, I go to something else," says the ever-patient multi-tasker. "I do not work under pressure or time limits. When it's done, it's finished!" He motions to this bold print maxim of Rick Honey, a Hopi wood carver.

At the north end of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, a 15-foot ivory gull, another Mayes creation, flies over a flower garden. A decade ago, an individual requested a seagull, a subsequent donation that travelers now enjoy.

Mayes designed his current hand hewn hemlock log cabin home and constructed virtually all of its distinctive furniture. He attributes his successful 60-year marriage to no arguments, never going to bed angry, and always trying to keep a smile.

"My wife and son give me a boost," says Mayes. "They are my incentive." He also credits his Creator for his artistic gift and for keeping him out of trouble.

Mayes's wife enjoys watching birds that frequent their feeders, purple martin gourds, and other honey-do birdhouses. A maze of mock orange, cross vine and other hummingbird blossoms drape the front porch.

While Internet surfing, Tom, Jr. (Mayes's son), located a friend with whom his father had served in the invasion of Normandy. After a 60-year separation, Mayes presented this man with a memory cane designating significant military events and insignia. He carves these canes to help hold up other veteran buddies.

Mayes particularly treasures his J.W. (John Wayne) commemorative rifle, a gift from his son. Someday, Mayes will carve a life-size bald eagle for this Order of the Arrow honoree.

Back at the studio, this genteel

man closes his eyes and points to his favorite saying on the adage door: The man who says it can't be done should not interrupt the man doing it!

"My hair may be gone, but my eyes are still good," he says, while designing an intricate epoxy metal gold leaf for the Mason organization. A minute pin is his only pattern.

"Tom Mayes is a heck of a role model," says Roger Herring. "He's patriotic, very much in love with his family, a spiritual and moral person."

"There's no hidden Tom Mayes. I never met a man as sincere and first class. He is the epitome of a gentleman."

Tom Mayes is to carving what Pavarotti is to opera and Willie Mays



**Left: Tom Mayes not only helped to design and build his log home, but also added a few creature comforts, like this hand carved door (above) and hand carved furniture.**

Moreland. "He is meticulous, anatomic and artful. He's one of the most decent human beings I've ever met. It's been a pleasure being a client of his, and his art fills me with joy."

"We love him to death," says Dot Dalton, Mayes's Cuckatuck Creek neighbor and proud owner of a



**Tom's wife, Mildred, has helped to inspire many of his carvings, like this downy woodpecker, which Tom carved and painted just for her.**

is to baseball. He may be the world's most versatile, thorough and gifted carver. In my mind, he is already a superstar. Most people just don't know it—yet. □

*Emily Grey is a naturalist, outdoor writer, photojournalist and attorney from Virginia's Eastern Shore.*





©Dwight Dyke

# Finally

*As temperatures cool across the state, hunters begin to long for Virginia's short October waterfowl season.*

by Tee Clarkson

**T**ime is blurred neon in blackness on the dash through sleep-starved eyes. Petty's guitar pounds the speakers. Hopped up on coffee, I turn the music up and roll the window down. Crisp air rushes in. The darkness before dawn is mine again. Fall is finally upon us.

For waterfowlers across the state, the opening of the short duck season in October marks the beginning of what will be a season of promise, of early mornings, of great retrieves,

and of near misses. It will be a season of conversations over coffee about why the ducks are here, or why they aren't here, or why the next storm off the Great Lakes should be the one to push them down from the North. For the time being though, those conversations can wait. The wood ducks are here as they always are in October, sure to provide some fast and exciting shooting.

I've hunted the same swamp with virtually the same people on the





# Fall

opening day of the short duck season, or the wood duck season as we call it, for 15 years now. We started hunting together in high school, and there was a time when some of us were away at college or living in other places, but most of us have made our way back again now, and fortunately the wood ducks are as thick as ever.

Pulling into the gravel parking area, I turn the music down. I'm not the first one here, but I'm not the last either. There's still an hour before we can shoot, plenty of time to load the boats and head back into the swamp. One of the beauties of wood duck hunting is it doesn't require a wealth of equipment. There is no need for a big spread of decoys, a rotating wing, or six calls. A shotgun, a dog and a good spot to hunt are enough. It's something a true minimalist appreciates.

It's still dark, but the outline of the trees against the sky is all we need to navigate the three-quarter mile ride across the lake and back into the

swamp. I feel like I could make it with my eyes closed I've done it so many times. Go straight about 300 yards, then right, then left, then right again. Don't take the last corner too close to avoid the fallen tree. Maybe I'll try that next time.

It's warm this year, warmer than others, the warmest I can remember for some time anyway. After 15 minutes the water begins to shallow and the arm of the pond becomes choked with lily pads. We're drawing ever closer to the mouth of the swamp. Shad shoot from under the boat and my dog peers into the water, contemplating a jump. "Not a good idea buddy." He's 12, and you would think he would know better, but I warn him anyway. This very well may be the last of these wood duck hunts for him. His gray muzzle shows his age, but his eyes will be as intent as ever as soon as it's light enough to search the sky for incoming birds.

We put out a few decoys, for the experience of hearing them splash in the water more than anything. At first light the wood ducks will be pouring in, moving too fast through near darkness to see a decoy or worry about a call.

We still have 15 minutes before shooting time. There are wood duck feathers on the water where we are standing against some brush, up to our waists in mud. They have been in here. It will be a good hunt. It has always been a good hunt.

Mixed with the changing colors of the fall leaves, hunting Virginia's early waterfowl season offers hunters a chance to take home a variety of ducks. Fast, flying wood ducks offer an additional reward to those hunters who are quick on the draw and have good eye sight. Not only are "woodies" a beautiful bird to observe, but they also make great table fare. A good tip during the fall season is to limit your decoy spread when hunting tight or wooded areas.



Wood duck ©John R. Ford





Unlike the later winter waterfowling season, where big decoy spreads and hunting large bodies of water is preferred, the October season offers excellent gunning around smaller areas, such as beaver ponds, swamps and small lakes.

"If you want to shoot your own limit you will have to be quick on the draw this morning." That's what we tell the others around us. We don't get together like this as much as we used to. In fact, this group may only be together once a year now, even though we live in the same town, converging on this one morning to relive old times and to create new ones.

The first whistling cry sounds from nowhere and a pair of ducks appear, silhouetted for a moment against the graying sky before splashing down in a small hole in the lily pads. They sit there for a moment, not 10 feet from us. They can sense something is wrong. Someone kicks the water and they are off. We all laugh. In three minutes it will be shooting time.

"Is it time yet?" A voice whispers from behind a bush.

"It's time," someone responds.

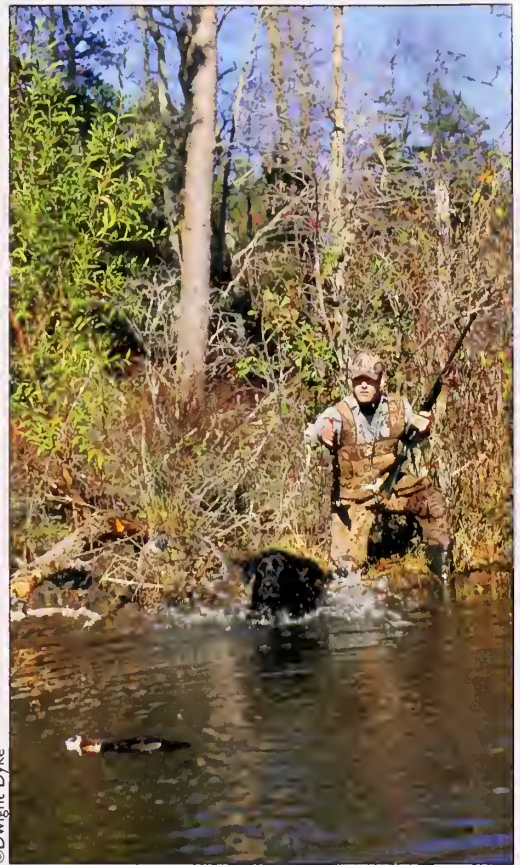






### *Don't Forget: Mandatory Duck Stamp, HIP*

If you plan to hunt migratory birds during the October season, remember when picking up your Virginia hunting license not to forget your Harvest Information Program (HIP) permit number and Federal Duck Stamp. **In addition, new legislation enacted this year requires Virginia waterfowl hunters to obtain the new Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp to hunt waterfowl in Virginia.** The proceeds from the sale of the stamp will be used for habitat improvement grants to nonprofit organizations, and Department of Game and Inland Fisheries initiatives to protect, restore, enhance and develop waterfowl habitat.



©Dwight Dyke

**When hunting from shore or around wooded and marshy areas it's always a good idea to have plenty of bug repellent on hand.**

The wood duck population in Virginia has remained stable for the last 10 to 15 years. Roughly 30,000 nesting pairs counted in the spring (pre-nesting) leads to somewhere in the neighborhood of 200,000 huntable birds by the fall, according to Gary Costanzo, the Migratory Game Bird Program Manager for the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. A comeback of beavers in Virginia has provided plenty of good habitat for wood ducks that forage on acorns and marsh seeds and nest in the cavities of trees and in human-constructed wood duck boxes. Wood duck boxes play an important role in maintaining the population, but Gary cautions, "building a wood duck box without a predator guard is inviting them to nest in a death trap."

Our hunt may only last several minutes on a good year, and on a slow one it may be an hour. We're right in the middle this year. For 30 minutes there's mayhem and madness. Wood ducks appear and then disappear.

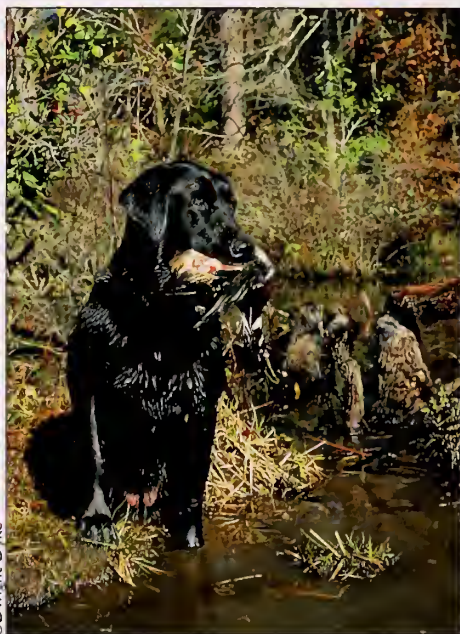


©Dwight Dyke





The early waterfowl season is a good time to put all that dog training you did over the summer to the test. As the author shows, the rewards can be well worth the effort.



Shots are fired. Ducks fall to the water. More are missed. Dogs are swimming everywhere. People are pointing, yelling. "I've got one here." "Who hit that one?" "I've got one over here."

There are plenty of great places to hunt wood ducks in Virginia. They like swamps and flooded timber, and we have our share of that. The short duck season in October provides prime wood duck hunting, offering excellent opportunity once you have located the birds. On warmer years wood ducks will stick around well into the regular duck season that opens in November.

The key is finding the birds. Pre-season scouting spells success when it comes to wood duck hunting. Game Farm Marsh WMA and the Chickahominy WMA are two excellent and popular spots to find "woodies," but a little scouting in your own area will be sure to pro-

duce results. The new Find Game program on the DGIF Web site ([www.dgif.gov](http://www.dgif.gov)) can be an excellent tool in helping you begin your scouting. "Any WMA that has a creek or stream flowing through it is likely to have a good number of wood ducks, even in the western part of the state" says Gary Constanzo. "Find the beaver ponds and you will find the wood ducks."

When it's over, we pick up the few decoys and drop the birds into one of the boats. We move slowly and without urgency, hanging on to the last moments of the hunt as long as we can, praising the dogs, joking about easy misses, complimenting great shots. It was a good morning.

*Tee Clarkson is an English teacher and in his spare time runs Virginia Fishing Adventures, a fishing camp for kids. For more information you can contact Tee at: [tsclarkson@virginiafishingadventures.com](mailto:tsclarkson@virginiafishingadventures.com).*





# Squirrel Watch

©Craig Haske

## A Tail of Two Squirrels and Three Unique Populations

*Biologists need your help in learning more about fox squirrels in Virginia.*

by Bruce Ingram

**I**t was in a nutshell (pun intended); a prime example of the differences between Virginia's gray squirrels and fox squirrels. This past autumn, I had driven to a Botetourt County dairy farm to squirrel hunt. This particular farm has an interesting dichotomy. On the lower side of a powerline field lies a very open woodlot with large mature white and northern red oaks and the





### We need your help!



The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is currently determining the distribution of fox squirrels in southeastern Virginia (Tidewater and East Piedmont) and needs your help. The variety found in southeastern Virginia typically has a black "mask". Their backs may be black or grayish red and the undersides may be white or light orange-red. The fox squirrel can be easily distinguished from the more common gray squirrel by its size. The fox squirrel is almost twice as large as the gray squirrel.

If you have seen a fox squirrel in southeastern Virginia, please let us know.

**Phone**  
Williamsburg (757) 253-7072  
Richmond (804) 367-6482  
Farmville (434) 392-9645

**Email**  
Pat.Cook@dgif.virginia.gov



Photos courtesy of Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries wildlife biologists are currently conducting a study, which the public is encouraged to participate in, to learn more about a unique population of fox squirrels that are found along the Piedmont region.



## Fun Facts: Squirrels versus Foxes

• Gray and fox squirrels do not interbreed.

• Gray squirrels may out compete fox squirrels, says Pat Cook, but not necessarily through aggressive behavior. Where abundant gray squirrel populations exist, fox squirrels typically won't be abundant. This may be due to different habitat needs/preferences of the two species.

• Gray squirrels have a body that is 8 to 10 inches long and a tail that is of similar length. Foxes possess a body that is 10 to 15 inches long and a tail 9 to 14 inches. The former weighs from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds, the latter tips the scales at just over a pound to 3 pounds.

• Gray squirrels are, well, predominantly gray. Fox squirrels exhibit considerable color variations. The predominant hue is rusty yellow with a pale yellow to orange belly. However, the body may feature mixes of yellow, white, and black. I have seen fox squirrels with almost black heads and white on their noses and ears. The Delmarva fox squirrel can be sometimes steel gray in color.

• Both species can make their teeth "chatter," typically when agitated.

• Gray squirrels flick their tails while foxes wave theirs.

• Both species have a gestation period of about 44 days and typically bear two litters a year.

• Gray and fox squirrels both bark. Although the sounds are very similar, we can, with practice, distinguish between the two species. Foxes bark out three, sometimes, four "quaks," followed by a "chuckling" sound that seems to come from deep within their bellies. The quaks of gray squirrels sound harsher and deeper.

• The tails of gray squirrels are gray with a white border. The tails of eastern fox squirrels are rusty in color. Traditionally, Virginia hunters have cut off the tails of fox squirrels and saved them as a memento of the outing.



Delmarva fox squirrel ©Rob & Ann Simmons



Gray squirrel ©Lloyd B. Hill

One of the first noticeable differences between the federally endangered Delmarva fox squirrel (top) and a gray squirrel (above) is the former is found on Virginia's Eastern Shore, at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. The Delmarva fox squirrel is about one and a half times larger than a gray squirrel. They are gray to steel blue, and the belly, nose, ears, feet and eye-ring are whitish. Their ears are also shorter, and the fur longer and coarser. Delmarva fox squirrels are more terrestrial, slower and less agile than the gray squirrel.

occasional shagbark hickory, tulip poplar and ash. On the upper side, lies a fairly dense second growth forest with chestnut oaks, scarlet and black oaks, and a great many mock-

ernut hickories, poplar and ash trees—some small, some of fair size, plus underbrush here and there. Gray squirrels predominate in the upper woodlot.





C. Bruce Ingram

**Veteran hunter Danny Kyle of Troutville shows his son Zach some mockernut hickory nuts. The various hickory trees, such as shagbark, mockernut and pignut, that grow in western Virginia often draw fox squirrels come autumn.**

Cattle often graze in the lower woodlot, thus contributing largely to its open nature; the bovines are fenced out of the upper one. I was specifically targeting fox squirrels that day, so I concentrated my actions to the lower woodlot and, in particular, one fox squirrel.

That morning, the creature had displayed many of the feeding tendencies, indicative of its species. It had foraged under a walnut tree that grows in the powerline. Then it had run across a fencerow (checking out persimmon and dogwood trees), and scampered across the field, pausing periodically to consume waste corn. Next, it had stopped on the outer edge of the lower woodlot and gleaned white oak acorns that had fallen into the field.

Finally, it had ascended a shagbark where it was sending sprays of hickory nutshells to the ground.

Fox squirrel ©Lloyd B. Hill



When the fox squirrel glimpsed me, it began to bark and I was able to pinpoint its exact location. The Remington 1100 20 gauge silenced the barking and gave me the main ingredients for squirrel casserole.

Pat Cook is the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) biologist who is most responsible for keeping tabs on Virginia's squirrels. As I did that day, he suggests that hunters after fox squirrels concentrate on field edges, fencerows and open woodlots.

"Fox squirrels generally prefer more open areas and are not common in closed-canopy forests," explains Cook. "Gray squirrels are more common in large tracts of dense mature hardwoods. However, their foods are very similar and, therefore, fox squirrels still need mast-producing trees, for example oaks and hickories. Eastern fox squirrels will be most abun-

## Does the Eastern Fox Squirrel Taste Better than Grays?

*When I first began hunting, veteran hunters informed me that fox squirrels were more prized than grays because the former tastes better. Maybe I am still influenced by those long ago opinions because I do consider the fox to be tastier in my favorite way to eat these creatures, that is a casserole. Pat Cook's opinion?*

*"They both taste pretty good to me," he says. "I guess I have noticed fox squirrels do taste a little better. They certainly have more meat."*





Fox squirrel ©Craig Haske

dant in open areas dotted with mast trees. The southern fox squirrel is a creature of open pine savanna, but they still need a few oaks and hickories scattered within their habitat. The diet of the southern fox squirrel consists of much more pine mast than that of the other fox squirrels."

Many Virginians may not have been aware that the Old Dominion hosts two populations of fox squirrels, actually we have three: the eastern fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger vulpinus*), southern fox squirrel (*S. n. niger*), and the Delmarva fox squirrel (*S. n. cinereus*).

"The Eastern fox squirrel is quite common in the western part of the state, that is west of the Blue Ridge, but it can also be found in counties that border the Blue Ridge and in the extreme northern Piedmont," informs Cook. "It is the only fox squirrel legally hunted in Virginia. Its range appears to be expanding eastward."

"The Delmarva fox squirrel is federally endangered. The only known population of this squirrel in Virginia is on the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge in Accomack County. The southern fox squirrel is quite rare in Virginia but is not classified as endangered or threatened, and there is no plan to list it. I don't want anyone who has these squirrels on their property to be afraid that their property rights will be infringed upon."

"The Southern fox squirrel is quite common in some other parts of the Southeast and is actually considered a game species. However, it is illegal to harvest fox squirrels in the counties where this subspecies does or may occur. In Virginia, it is found

**Taking a stand in an open woodlot most anywhere west of the Blue Ridge will often result in hunters having a chance to take a fox squirrel. Right: A few squirrel hunting essentials that you might want to consider would be the wearing of blaze orange, hearing protection and plenty of shells, whether you're using a shotgun or small caliber rifle.**





©Dwight Dyke

in a few localities in the southeastern Coastal Plain.”

Contrary to popular belief, continues Cook, much of Virginia was probably open land prior to European settlement. Dominant forest types included open longleaf pine savannah in the extreme southeastern Coastal Plain and shortleaf pine mixed with oak and hickory in other portions of the Coastal Plain and Piedmont. Native Americans created and maintained these forests by frequently burning them. Unfortunately, very little of these forests remain and many associated wildlife species have declined severely.

“One such animal is the Southern fox squirrel,” explains Cook. “The historic range of this subspecies probably included most of the southeastern Coastal Plain and southeastern Piedmont of Virginia. It is now known to occur at only a few localities in the southeastern portion of the Coastal Plain.”

Cook is currently working on a Southern Fox Squirrel Project, which has two objectives.

“The first is to determine the current distribution of the subspecies,” he says. “One way I’m doing this is by distributing information sheets

that request the public to notify the VDGIF if they see one of the squirrels. I consider hunters to be the most likely group to encounter the squirrels. Therefore, the sheets have been distributed to DMAP cooperators and check stations in southeastern Virginia. I plan to distribute the sheets to other groups likely to encounter fox squirrels in that area of the state as well.

“The second objective is to identify suitable habitat in that region that is not currently occupied by fox squirrels and to determine the feasibility of reintroducing squirrels into those habitats.”

This past autumn I saw more eastern fox squirrels in the Southwest Virginia counties I regularly go afield in than I had in recent memory. Were those sightings just random chance or a function of a good brood year, or of a creature expanding its range. Obviously, I don’t have answers to those questions, but I can tell you that the eastern subspecies is a fun and challenging small game species to pursue. □

*Bruce Ingram is the author of the following books: The James River Guide, The New River Guide, and The Shenandoah / Rappahannock Rivers Guide.*



©Bruce Ingram

*The VDGIF is conducting the Southern Fox Squirrel Project in the following counties and cities: Amelia, Brunswick, Charles City, Chesapeake, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Gloucester, Greenville, Hampton, Henrico, Isle of Wight, James City, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, New Kent, Newport News, Norfolk, Nottoway, Prince George, Southampton, Suffolk, Surry, Sussex, Virginia Beach, and York.*

*If you see fox squirrels in any of these counties, please contact the following VDGIF offices: Williamsburg (757-253-7072), Richmond (804) 367-6482, and Farmville (434) 392-9645 or e-mail Pat Cook at Pat.Cook@dgif.virginia.gov.*



# *A Sanctuary Amid*

*Dyke Marsh may  
be small  
in size, but it more than  
makes up for it as one of  
Northern Virginia's  
most important  
environmental  
treasures.*



©Gregory J. Pels





# the Sprawl

by Glenda C. Booth

**M**ost harried motorists gridlocked on Northern Virginia's Capital Beltway hardly notice the wetlands complex just south of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge as they crawl across the Potomac River in one of the nation's worst traffic bottlenecks. The mudflats and marshes teem with life. This is the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.

Wetlands, like Dyke Marsh, are transitional zones where the water meets the land and are one of nature's most dynamic ecosystems. Kirk Havens, a Virginia Institute of Marine Science scientist, says, "In an area roughly the size of an average desk top, there can be as many as 8,300 animals." In a new film celebrating the marsh, Virginia U. S. Senator John Warner calls the marsh a "magnificent little oasis."

©Emily Grey

Located in Northern Virginia, 380-acre Dyke Marsh is home to thousands of animals and birds. Great blue herons (left) marsh wrens (above) and dragonflies are just a few of the interesting sights you will see during your visit. One of the best ways to view wildlife in the marsh is by canoe or kayak.



©Ed Eder



Jeff Trollinger, the DGIF's Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail manager, agrees: "Dyke Marsh is one of our premiere sites on the birding trail in Northern Virginia. It is particularly nice because it is close to a large population area and allows folks to not drive far and still get a quality wildlife experience."

## Congress Recognized Its Value

The U. S. Congress designated Dyke Marsh as part of the National Park Service system in 1959, "so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount." (Public Law 86-41)

©Ed Eder



Today, tucked in a metropolitan area of almost 5 million people, Dyke Marsh, at 5,000 to 7,000 years old, is a rare remnant of the many freshwater tidal marshes that once lined the Potomac. It is half its 650-acre size when Captain John Smith sailed by in the 1600s.

Nineteenth century farmers tried to convert it to farmland by walling it in with earthen dikes, hence the name (the Colonial spelling was

While Congress's action halted those abuses, challenges remain today.

## Biologically Rich

At 380 acres, the wetland has three major zones or plant communities: the marsh proper (tidal freshwater marsh), the floodplain forest, and the swamp forest.

Of known species, there are 300 plants, 6,000 arthropods, 38 fish, 16 reptiles, 14 amphibians and over 230 birds. In 2003, 46 species of birds were confirmed breeding in Dyke Marsh and six additional species were probable breeders.

A May arthropod walk led by Dr. Edward Barrows, of Georgetown University, quickly expanded to a biodiversity walk. The group froze watching a black rat snake vanish into a woodpecker hole and then languidly droop its head out, sated. They examined the fake "wild-eyes" of the one-inch click beetle and watched shad fingerlings shimmer in the shallows. They marveled at the

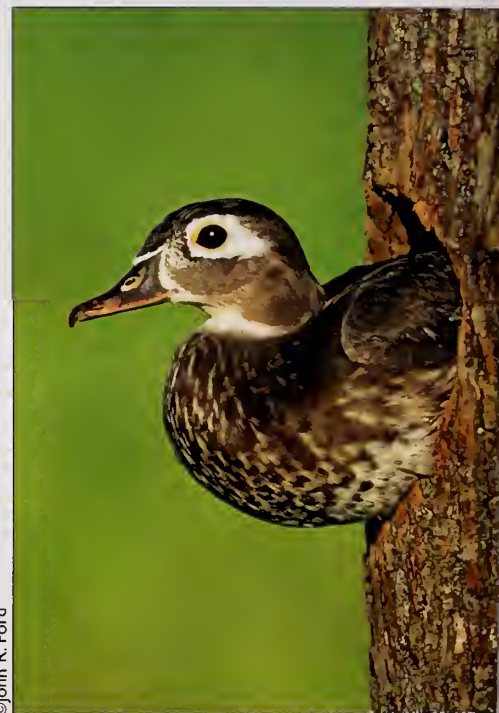
large teardrop-shaped Baltimore oriole nest woven onto sycamore limbs as cottonwood seeds floated in the air and gently landed on the spatterdock. Barrows said there are 18,000 species of organisms in Dyke Marsh.

There are muskrat, brown bats, foxes, cottontail rabbits, gray squirrels, shrews, field mice, bullfrogs, leopard frogs, northern water snakes and snapping and painted turtles.

Among plants and trees are nar-



©Rob & Ann Simpson



©John R. Ford

Dyke Marsh has an incredible diversity of bird life. Avid bird watchers are often treated to spectacular viewing opportunities of bird species, such as the colorful Baltimore oriole (left) and wood duck (right).

"dyke"), a then-legal form of filling wetlands. Later, the marsh was gouged with 30-foot holes when it was dredged for gravel. A long-time volunteer steward of the marsh, Ed Risley laments in the film, "I used to lie in bed at night and hear the dredges eating up the marsh." It is pocked with dredge spoil and big chunks of concrete protrude, reminders of the 1960s when the marsh was a dumping ground for construction debris.

**Left:** One of the most stunning observations from those who visit Dyke Marsh for the first time is how wild and unspoiled the area is. Even with the renovation of the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge and surrounding development a pair of ospreys (right) have decided to make their nest and raise their young along the banks of the marsh.



©Ed Eder



row-leafed cattail, arrowhead, arrow arum, pickerelweed, sweetflag, spatterdock, northern wild rice, swamp rose, buttonbush, alder, red osier dogwood, elm, sweetgum red maple, green and pumpkin ash, black willow, spicebush and arrow-wood.

Mummichog, pumpkinseed, bluegill, banded killifish, largemouth bass and tessellated darter make the Dyke Marsh nursery their home. Its waters support fishing and water-

fowl hunting and it is a stopover point for many migratory birds.

Dyke Marsh has the only known nesting population of marsh wrens in the upper Potomac tidal zone, a species once found all along the marshes of the Potomac River. Sandy Spencer, wildlife biologist with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge, has studied them extensively. She says that in the late 1800s and early 1900s, there were hundreds of singing males; by 1999, only 34. Because marsh wrens have very narrow breeding territory preferences, the habitat loss at Dyke Marsh has meant even less suitable breeding habitat. In 1999, only 15 percent or 56 acres of wetlands was narrowleaf cattail marsh adjacent to water or subject to flooding, the wrens' preferred breeding habitat; and of that, only about four percent or 15 acres was used for breeding.

Just south of Old Town Alexandria, visitors to Dyke Marsh will find Belle Haven Marina and picnic area, which has excellent hiking and bike trails, along with good access for bird watching. Muskrats (below), turtles (right) and a multitude of bird species make Dyke Marsh a must stop on the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail.



©Dwight Dyke



©John R. Ford



©Gregory J. Pels

## On the Edge, the Potomac River's Dyke Marsh

The Friends of Dyke Marsh, a conservation organization, commissioned a film in celebration of the group's 30-year anniversary, titled *On the Edge, the Potomac River's Dyke Marsh* (DVD 2006, 43 minutes) and produced by David Eckert, Virginia Village Productions. Copies can be ordered for \$25 from Friends of Dyke Marsh, P. O. Box 7183, Alexandria, Virginia 22307-7183. Write Dyke Marsh DVD on the check.

## Monograph

Reprints of *The Dyke Marsh Preserve Ecosystem*, a study of Dyke Marsh by Dr. David Johnston, are available from the Friends of Dyke Marsh for \$10. The 50-page study was published in the *Virginia Journal of Science*, winter 2000. Send \$10 and your name and address, the designation "for the Johnston study," to FODM, P.O. Box 7183, Alexandria VA 22307-7183.

## How to Visit Dyke Marsh

From the George Washington Memorial Parkway, the entrance to Dyke Marsh is the last exit going north, before Alexandria, or one mile south of Alexandria. The sign says, "Belle Haven Park and Marina; Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve." Turn east at the sign and then left into the parking lot. Walk about three minutes south on the paved walk; turn left toward the river. Immediately on the right is the trailhead, a signed entrance to the marsh. This dirt road narrows into a path and leads to a boardwalk of about three-quarters of a mile through the marsh to the river and to an observation platform. Access is free.

Year round, the Friends of Dyke Marsh hold an 8 a.m. Sunday walk. Meet in the Belle Haven picnic area parking lot.

## For More Information

[www.fodm.org](http://www.fodm.org);

[www.nps.gov/gwmp/dyke-marsh.htm](http://www.nps.gov/gwmp/dyke-marsh.htm)



## Challenges

Dyke Marsh is at the northeast corner of Fairfax County, population one million, next to the city of Alexandria, population 135,000. Squished up against the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a busy thoroughfare, and a bike trail, the sounds of marsh life compete with the cacophony of suburbia—backyard barbecuers, steady traffic, sirens, roller-bladers, walkers, strollered babies, bike bells, airplanes, commercial barges and general river traffic.

Forty-two square miles of residential and commercial development drain into the marsh. It's battered by polluted runoff, contaminated sediment, lawn and golf course chemicals, upland erosion and air pollution. Eighty percent of Fairfax County's streams are in fair to poor condition. The Potomac River watershed was given a C+ in October 2005 by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin and parts of the river are on the state's "dirty rivers" list. Nutrient enrichment or eutrophication of the river by fertilizers, sewage and pollution upstream degrade "the nation's river."

The marsh suffers from an explosion of at least 78 non-native plants, including porcelain berry, English ivy, Japanese honeysuckle, Asiatic bittersweet, yellow iris, the common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and purple loosestrife. Some plants have become extinct, according to Donald Kelso's

1993 report to the National Park Service.

Despite its wounds, Dyke Marsh is, as naturalist Louis Halle wrote in spring in Washington in 1947, "the nearest thing to primeval wilderness in the immediate vicinity of the city [Washington]."

## Restoration Hopes

Park Service officials have determined that restoration of the marsh is both "feasible" and "desirable" and the Friends of Dyke Marsh, a local advocacy group, have made restoration a top priority. They emphasize that the marsh is one of the most significant temperate, climax, narrow-leaved cattail, tidal, freshwater, riverine marshes in the U.S. National Park System and that human activity will continue to degrade the marsh without action.

The Park Service is seeking \$500,000 for an environmental impact statement, the first step. Pledging his support, Congressman Jim Moran has labeled restoring Dyke Marsh an "important conservation effort." Senator Warner wants to "bring it back to its full grandeur."

Fairfax County state Senator Toddy Puller says, "Dyke Marsh is a national treasure that must be restored and preserved. One of the last remaining freshwater tidal marshes along the Potomac River, it is an irreplaceable wetland that must be saved for generations to come."

Former President George H. W. Bush established a policy of no net



**Dyke Marsh helps to filter water that flows into the Potomac River. This least bittern takes advantage of the rich aquatic life found along the marsh.**

loss of the nation's wetlands and President George W. Bush expanded that to an "overall increase of wetlands in America each year." The Commonwealth has committed to restoring wetlands and the health of the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.

A restored Dyke Marsh can support more wildlife, more biodiversity, more ecological services, and increase aesthetic, educational and recreational opportunities for the nation, in a highly urbanized community that provides few wildlife viewing opportunities, beyond the typical backyard gray squirrel. The Washington metropolitan area will add 1.6 million people in the next 20 years. As local developer Ray Smith laments in the film, Northern Virginia's population has quadrupled, but "we've not added any Dyke Marshes."

"Winter or summer, if you wish to match yourself against a wilderness, I can recommend nothing better than the tidal marshes around Dyke..." wrote Halle in 1947. Dyke Marsh enthusiasts fully agree. □

Glenda C. Booth, a freelance writer and legislative consultant, grew up in Southwest Virginia and has lived in Northern Virginia 37 years where she is active in conservation efforts.



Bullfrog ©Ann & Rob Simson





# Journal

## 2006 Outdoor Calendar of Events

**October 5-8:** *Eastern Shore Birding Festival*, Northampton County.

**October 14:** *Family Fishing Workshop* at Bear Creek Lake State Park in Cumberland County. For more information call 804-367-6778.

**November 4:** *Shenandoah Audubon Annual Birding Festival*, Jim Barnett Park, Winchester. For more information call 540-667-6778. □



### That's No Bull!

by Jennifer Worrell

Game wardens often find themselves in "shaky" situations, and they are generally prepared for the most unexpected of circumstances. This story was different for one officer who, of course, wishes to remain anonymous. This warden, who makes many excellent cases and is considered a model officer by his supervision, had a minor slip-up during one hunting season, which led to some rather "earth-shaking" results.

Our nameless friend was patrolling a pasture late one evening to keep some local poachers at bay. As the night shifted to the wee morning hours, the officer found himself drifting into slumber as he sat quietly in the driver's seat of his patrol vehicle. As he entered "Dreamland," the warden found himself in the midst of a nightmarish earthquake. As the world trembled around him, our friend lurched awake, only to find

that his truck was shaking violently—this unfortunate set of circumstances was no dream!

As our now-alert hero leaped valiantly from his vehicle to find the source of the quake, he stopped dead in his jumbled tracks. He found himself face to rump with a sleepy bull who was using the corner of his truck as a backscratcher. Upon facing the officer's bewildered stare, the bovine gave a disgusted sigh at the disturbance, finished his backrub, and then casually ambled away. As the bull gave one last irritated backward glance, he saw the officer scratching his own head in disbelief, vowing to stock up on energy drinks for the next spotlighting patrol. □



by Beth Hester

*A Fly Fisherman's Blue Ridge*  
by Christopher Camuto  
Trade paper edition published 2001  
University of Georgia Press  
ISBN: 0-8203-2304-7  
With new introduction by author

*"It must be the alternate rhythm of wading and casting that makes fly fishing seem like searching. All day I am poised between the resistance of the river and the pulse of each cast, at the end of which a tippet unfurls and brings a fly to the water. Days tick forward with the rhythm of casting, held up only by the brief pause during which the line loads the rod."*

The ancient peoples of Britain had a special feeling for those brief

pauses in time that writer and angler Christopher Camuto describes so well. As the wheel of the year turned and the seasons changed, there were certain times... moments of transformation when the veil between worlds became thin, and everything was possible.

In *A Fly Fisherman's Blue Ridge* Camuto describes the way the seasons transfigure the trout waters of the Blue Ridge Mountains in a way that is both meditative and blunt.

He touches on regional geology, the taxonomy of surrounding plant and animal life, and the fleeting qualities of a mountain landscape becoming less and less bountiful through environmental degradation both natural and man-made. Thus, there is an elegiac tinge to Camuto's prose, a resigned frustration with the politics of greed and the willful disregard for, and suppression of scientific data. The needless deaths of rivers and streams are the end result.

This book is our generation's *Silent Spring*. The truth is that all anglers everywhere share an eerie kinship with the canary in the coal mine, and also with the trout, oak, hemlock, grouse and deer.

Camuto reminds us of the familiar, visceral pleasures of fishing as the seasons change: the wonder of spring hatches, the wading in cool summer streams, the cold beer that settles in after you've been fishing hard all day, the off-time spent attending to gear, or the hours hunched over the tying bench carrying us through the late winter months.

Camuto also acknowledges the seemingly incomprehensible fact that tinned meat on saltines actually tastes good in the woods.

Treat yourself to some literary magic this year and read, or re-read *A Fly Fisherman's Blue Ridge*. It's also a



thoughtful gift idea for the angler in your life. As long as there are anglers who care about their home waters, there can be glimmers of cautious optimism.

#### *Heart Shots: Women Write About Hunting*

Mary Zeiss Stange, editor  
2003 Stackpole Books  
With line drawings and photographs  
ISBN: 1-8117-0044-5

There are many good collections of essays on hunting, but this collection is like no other. Hunters who happen to be female penned all the 46 essays and stories in this anthology. What makes this volume particularly special is its historical breadth. For example, Mary Hastings Bradley's 1922 selection from "On the Gorilla Trail" is preceded by a much more contemporary piece by Durga Bernhard entitled "The Gift of Artemis: A Hunting Mother's Perspective" written in 2002.

Though some would resist the classification of outdoor writing by gender as needless segregation, editor Zeiss-Stange writes: "The essential appeal of the hunt, the drive to get back to nature, and to express in narrative, image and metaphor the complex meanings of oneself as predator: Such impulses are not only ageless, they are surely genderless." Nevertheless, she also asserts that if only because of long-standing social prohibitions, "women have different ways of perceiving and framing what it is about hunting that makes us more fully human."

There are vast varieties of game and terrain covered by the stories in *Heart Shots*: Agnes Herbert describes her trip to Alaska through Butte, Montana, "surely the ugliest town in all America." Page Lambert contemplates deerstalking in Wyoming; Annie Oakley provides notes on her shooting career, and B. Jill Carroll hunts teal in Texas with her mother's Remington Model 11.

This is definitely a book that should be in every collection...just perfect for dipping into on a crisp fall evening. □


## Virginia Wildlife

### Photo Contest Reminder





The deadline for submitting photographs for the 2006 *Virginia Wildlife* Photography Contest is December 1, 2006. Winning photographs will appear in the March 2007, special issue of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine. For more information, visit the Department's Web site at: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/events/photocontest.pdf>.



Fisheries to provide better and more current information about hunting land location and access in Virginia. *Find Game* allows users to map hunting areas by location and/or by game species, along with hunting quality by species, land manager contact information, site description, facilities available, access information and associated Web links. To learn more about *Find Game* visit [www.dgif.virginia.gov/hunting/findgame](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/hunting/findgame).

*Find Game* is an interactive Web-based map viewer designed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland

### Virginia Wheelin' Sportsmen Fall Hunt Schedule

Virginia Wheelin' Sportsmen is proud to offer 10 exciting hunts for the 2006 fall season in all areas of the state. Our hunts are open to all physically challenged individuals and are free of charge. We have worked hard to arrange these hunts and encourage everyone to participate. Please feel free to pass this information along to anyone with a disability. If you have a disability and would like to participate in any of these hunts, go to [www.vanwtf.com](http://www.vanwtf.com) and download the hunt application from the "Downloads" section of the main menu. All applications must be e-mailed or postmarked by OCTOBER 2nd. For additional information contact Robin Clark at 434-979-6154 or e-mail [weeeelz@aol.com](mailto:weeeelz@aol.com). □



"That's strange-his tracks end right here"



by Lynda Richardson

## Take Care of Your Delicate Digital Camera

**I** remember the days when I could shoot in a rain storm, accidentally drop my Canon F1 35mm SLR film camera on the sidewalk, watch it land in a puddle, pick it up, shake it off, and keep on shooting. Cameras made over 20 years ago could just about withstand anything! But today's complex digital cameras are not the tough workhorses of the past. They are delicate optical instruments which need constant cleaning and attention to remain functional. To help you keep your digital camera in good working order, I have prepared a list of recommendations on how to protect your digital camera from the elements.

1. Get a padded, waterproof (not water resistant!) camera bag to keep your camera safe. If you get caught in a storm, you can quickly protect your equipment.
2. Make or purchase a cleaning kit and carry it in your camera bag. A cleaning kit should consist of a washable, micro-fiber cloth or a package of lens tissues and lens cleaning solution, lens brush and a bulb blower. Do not put lens cleaning solution directly on the front of the lens but on the tissue itself and clean the glass that way. Otherwise, the liquid can accidentally flow into the corners of the lens and mess up its internal workings.
3. Speaking of cleaning, for some of the more expensive digital cameras you need a sensor cleaning kit. Cleaning your sensor is a very necessary though scary proposition as one scratch could forever be engraved on your sensor. Read your camera manual and be sure to get the proper equipment before attempting a sensor cleaning. (I will have an up-coming column on sensor cleaning!)
4. Use lens caps to protect your



**Zip-lock bags and UV filters offer extra protection for your digital equipment!**

lenses and body caps to protect your delicate camera's interior. For protection while shooting, buy high quality UV or skylight filters for the fronts of all of your lenses.

5. Want an inexpensive, lightweight, protective camera covering for those trips to the beach? Zip-lock bags can protect your whole camera and even some of your lenses as well. Cut a hole in front for the lens, secure it with tape so the lens remains protected by the zip-lock and shoot away!
6. Do not ever leave your camera in a hot car! Extreme heat can damage delicate circuitry and cause the camera to malfunction.
7. Beware of moving your equipment between temperature extremes such as going from a cold, air conditioned building to the hot, steamy outdoors. Sudden changes in temperature will create condensation on the lenses, viewfinder and internal workings. The best way to avoid condensation is place your equipment in plastic bags and allow it to slowly acclimate to the temperature change.

I hope this helps you protect your digital camera for years to come! □

You are invited to submit one to five of your best photographs to "Image of the Month," Virginia Wildlife Magazine, P.O. Box 11104, 4010 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230-1104. Send original slides, high quality prints, or high res jpeg files on disk and include a self addressed, stamped envelope or other shipping method for return. Also, please include any pertinent information regarding how and where you captured the images and what camera and settings you used. We look forward to seeing and sharing your work with the readers of Virginia Wildlife magazine!

## Image of the Month



Congratulations go to Bob Peace, of Williamsburg, for his beautiful and well composed photograph of a male American robin taken right in his own backyard. Bob has been taking photographs for over 40 years and mentioned that digital photography has rejuvenated his interest in photography and improved his results. Bob used a Canon EOS 20D digital camera and a Canon 400mm lens which he set at ISO 1600 using 1/640th at f.9.0. Great shot Bob!



# On The Water

by Jim Crosby



## Lights That Talk?

Looking across a body of water at night offers a magical scene. The winking, blinking and steady burning lights paint a picture of mystery and intrigue. Identifying the various lights can become a fascinating pastime. A flashing red light marks the left side of a channel when going downstream while a flashing green light marks the right side of the channel. It's great fun to sit on the end of a dock or the bank of a river and identify the lights within your purview. Being able to identify the various lights is a measure of your nautical knowledge and when afloat, is critical to your safety.

Lights on the water are more than just nautical decorations. If you can read them, they tell a very important story and if they are improperly displayed, they can spell disaster. For example, a channel marker that has drifted off station and onto the rocks can lead a seaman aground.

The navigation lights on a boat are important to others on the water because they are the basis for preventing collisions.



I have seen boats display their red and green lights on the wrong side offering real confusion to those approaching the vessel in the dark. This happens when they are removed for cleaning, polishing or replacement. They get put back on the opposite sides.

Recreational boats operating at night are required to display navigation lights between sunset and sunrise, as well as, during periods of restricted visibility. Those lights include a red light on the left side of the boat and a green light on the right side, as well as an all-around white light displayed above them. Displayed properly, these lights can tell other boaters which side of your boat is visible to them and whether or not they must give way to your passing. If you are approaching a vessel and see only its red sidelight, you must give that vessel unrestricted passage. If you see only its green light, it must give you clear passage. Now, that's important to nautical safety and, therefore, the correct display of those lights is critical to boat handling decisions.

One huge mistake I have seen on Virginia waters is the incorrect display of big, bright, white lights that resemble headlights on a car. They are only intended for docking purposes and must never be used in running because the *Virginia Watercraft Owner's Guide* states, "No other lights shall be exhibited that could impair the visibility of required running lights or impair the visibility of approaching vessels."

Have you ever been hit in the eyes with a bright white light at night on the water? Not only does it wipe out your night vision for 30 minutes or more, it blinds you to anything beyond it. To shine a bright white light into a fellow seaman's eyes at night is considered the ultimate insult and offense.

Please spread the word among your fellow boaters that those headlamps must not be used while underway at night because they are detrimental to you and your fellow boaters. Those who use them have no night vision of their own

and they are blinding those they approach.

"What about my canoe or other slow-moving vessels, you say?" The Navigation Rules state, "A power-driven vessel of less than 7 meters (23' 11½") and whose maximum speed cannot exceed 7 knots may, in lieu of the lights prescribed above, exhibit an all-around white light." That could include a flashlight or lantern that could be displayed in sufficient time to prevent a collision. That provision covers a vessel under oars or sails, as well.

Another problem I see on Virginia waters that indicates the lack of knowledge of the use of one's lights shows up during special events at night where you have a very high concentration of boaters maneuvering around each other.

During these special events at night, the improper display of navigation lights becomes a real problem. Boaters leave their docks or landings in daylight and aren't concerned with lights until the sun goes down. That's when they find they have broken wires, burned-out bulbs, blown fuses or they have left their pole (white) light elsewhere. So, how do they get back to their landing—they should be towed by a vessel displaying proper lights.

Many don't even realize that they have two different navigation light displays—one for running and one for at anchor or adrift. Some small vessels have a three-position switch with one position for running, one for anchoring and one for off. I can't count the number of skippers I have introduced to this little switch—how it works and when to use each position.

The sum of this situation is to be sure and obtain the latest available copy of the *Virginia Watercraft Owner's Guide* and read it! You will be a much safer and smarter operator under the laws of the state. □

*Author's Note: I always welcome feedback, input and/or suggestions from readers. My e-mail address is: jimcrosby@adelphia.net*



# RECIPES

by Joan Cone

## Worldwide Mallards

**I**t is a pleasure to receive a gift of a pair of mallard breasts, especially from Larry Johnson of Williamsburg. Larry had skinned and boned these for easier cooking. The following quick and simple recipe provides your choice of rare or medium dining. Pounding the breasts saves cooking time while tenderizing.

### Menu

*Avocado Soup*  
*Brandied Mallard Breasts*  
*Parsleyed New Potatoes*  
*Scalloped Red Cabbage*  
*Honey Pumpkin Pie*

### Avocado Soup

- 2 ripe avocados, quartered
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste
- Ground red pepper to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
- 3 cups low sodium chicken broth, chilled
- 1 container (8 ounces) sour cream

Process avocado quarters in a blender or food processor until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides. Set aside. Process remaining ingredients except sour cream. Pour into a large bowl; gradually whisk in avocado and sour cream. Cover and chill 1 hour. Makes 4 cups.

### Brandied Mallard Breasts

- 1 pound boneless, skinless duck breasts from 2 mallards, split in halves and pounded to 1/4-inch thickness
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon snipped fresh chives
- 1 tablespoon brandy
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 3 tablespoons butter

In small bowl, combine lemon juice with next 4 ingredients. Set aside. Sprinkle dry mustard evenly over duck breast pieces. In 10-inch skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add breast pieces and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until meat is desired doneness, turning meat over once or twice. Pour sauce over duck and cook for 30 seconds longer to warm sauce. Serve duck with pan drippings drizzled over top. Makes 4 servings.



### Parsleyed New Potatoes

- 1 1/2 pounds tiny new potatoes
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup snipped parsley
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Scrub or scrape new potatoes. Cook in boiling water till just tender, 15 to 20 minutes; drain. Peel if desired. Meanwhile, melt butter in a saucepan and stir in parsley and lemon juice. Pour over hot potatoes. Serves 4 to 6.

### Scalloped Red Cabbage

- 1 red cabbage, about 2 pounds, shredded
- 2 cups boiling water
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons cracker meal

Cook cabbage in 2 cups boiling water 8 minutes. Remove from heat and drain. Place cabbage in lightly greased 2-quart baking dish. Melt butter in a small saucepan over medium-high heat and whisk in flour. Slowly whisk in milk until smooth. Remove from heat and whisk in cheese, salt and pepper until cheese is melted. Pour cheese mixture evenly over cabbage. Sprinkle evenly with cracker meal. Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake cabbage, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until bubbly. Makes 5 to 6 servings.

### Honey Pumpkin Pie

#### Crust

- 1 Pillsbury refrigerated pie crust for 9-inch pie pan

#### Filling

- 1 can (16 ounces) pumpkin
- 3/4 cup honey
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk

Prepare pastry for One Crust Pie according to directions on box. Preheat oven to 425° F. In large bowl combine pumpkin, honey, salt, and spices; mix well. Add eggs and blend well. Gradually add milk, beating at low speed until well blended. Pour into pastry-lined pan. Bake at 425° F. for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350° F. and bake an additional 45 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted near center comes out clean. Cool completely before serving. Store in refrigerator. Makes 8 servings. □



story and illustration  
by Spike Knuth

## The Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

**T**he term "shorebird" is mostly used in reference to sandpipers, plovers, turnstones, willets, dowitchers and the like; birds that live along sandy, muddy shores. One of the hardiest of them is the dunlin. Dunlins winter farther north than most shorebirds. Even on cold, icy days in winter, waterfowl hunters will commonly see these small shorebirds on the marsh mudflats. Once heavily hunted, they are no longer considered a game bird but are protected, and have become numerous.

Actually they have been known by two names for many years. In spring and summer they were called red-backed sandpipers, and in fall and winter they were known as dunlins. During the breeding season their backs were chestnut-colored with black and tan markings. The underparts were white with a black belly patch, along with a darker crown and faintly streaked head and chest. This attire can be seen in Virginia on late northerly migrants in May.

When they return in October to spend the winter, their colors are changed to ashy-gray upper parts, a dusky breast band and whitish underparts. They may still show faint streaking on chest and head. Now it is known simply as the dunlin throughout the year. The European dunlin is almost identical and both species are circumpolar.

Dunlins have been called by a variety of other names as well, including black-bellied sandpiper, red-backed dunlin, brant bird, and winter snipe. They measure 8½ to 9 inches and have a fairly large, long, curved bill for its size. They are relatively short-legged and short-

necked, giving it a hunch backed appearance.

Like many other shorebirds, dunlins fly in tight, compact flocks, flying almost as one with great precision in twisting, rising, turning, circling flight without getting in each other's way. When the flock lands, they scatter as they set down allowing room for each, folding their wings in unison and becoming statue-still for a brief period. In flight their wings show a distinct, narrow white line and a grayish breast band. Their call in flight is described as "purre," and their song a rapid, tinkling trill that drops off in pitch but rises in tempo. Once on the ground when they begin feeding they'll utter soft twitters or an occasional raspy "cheezp."

Dunlins arrive to Virginia mainly in October and the bulk of them remain into March, inhabiting beaches, sand bars, tidal flats of bays and rivers, and mudflats of marshes. They feed by probing for small mollusks, crustaceans, worms, sand fleas and other aquatic invertebrates. They

will go to inland marshes especially during migrations but they tend to stay close to the coast.

Come spring, when they leave Virginia, they fly to their northern breeding grounds in the Arctic tundra, arriving there about mid-May. They will pair off shortly after and begin nesting on the ground near hummocks, grass tufts and small stunted shrubs and trees, near small pools. Four greenish-brown eggs are laid and they hatch in about 22 days.

Time is short on the tundra, and the young are able to feed on their own on a great abundance of food that is available at just the right time. In three weeks they are able to fly. Oddly, the male is said to have stronger brooding tendencies. When the female abandons her young the male is said to take over until the brood is fledged.

Southward migration may start as early as July and they are often found in association with dowitchers. On the winter feeding grounds they'll often associate with sanderlings, plovers and turnstones. □





# VIRGINIA WILDLIFE OUTDOOR CATALOG



## 2006 Limited Edition Virginia Wildlife Collector's Knife

This year's knife has been customized for us by Buck Knives. Each knife is individually serial numbered, and comes with a distinctive rosewood handle and gold lettering. This year's knife also includes two white-tailed deer etched on the blade. This custom knife not only comes with a leather sheath, but also a custom made solid, cherry box with a decorative wildlife scene engraved on the cover.

Item #VW-406

\$85.00 each



## Virginia Wildlife Caps

Our caps feature three unique designs. Each cap is 100% cotton, size adjustable and embroidered with the Virginia Wildlife logo. \$11.95 each

- High profile- Camo with Black Letters - Item #VW-113
- High profile- Blaze Orange - Item #VW-114
- High profile- Camo with Tan Letters - Item #VW-112
- High profile- Virginia Wildlife - Item #VW-120
- Low profile- Virginia Wildlife - Item #VW-119

## To Order

Visit the Department's  
Web Site at:

[www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov)

Or Call (804) 367-2569

Please allow 3 to 4 weeks for delivery.



## Virginia Wildlife DVD

"A Professional Guide to Field Dressing, Skinning and Butchering White-Tailed Deer."

This video was produced to give you step-by-step instructions on how to field dress a deer as demonstrated by VDGI Wildlife Biologist Ron Hughes. Then, professional butcher and hunter education instructor Rob Bingel demonstrates the best way to cape out a deer for mounting. The video really gets good when he shows in detail how to de-bone and professionally butcher a deer using only a knife and a hacksaw.

By the end of the video you will learn how to make butterfly chops, de-bone a front shoulder, tie up a roast using a butcher's knot, be able to identify all the proper cuts of meat on a deer, and more!

Item #VW250

\$12.00 Includes S&H



## Virginia Wildlife Music CD

Virginia Wildlife is excited to offer a compelling and lively array of classic Celtic and Appalachian music that celebrates Virginia's wildlife and natural resources. This musical journey is composed and performed by Timothy Seaman, of Williamsburg, Va., along with guest appearances from other musical masters. (Total time 66:32 min.)

Item #VW-219

\$10.00 each



# The New 2006-2007

# Virginia Wildlife Calendar

## Is Now Available

It's that time of year again to purchase the 2006-2007 Virginia Wildlife Calendar, one of the most informative and beautiful wildlife calendars in the country. No other calendar will give you the best times to go fishing and hunting, unique natural resource information that will amaze and educate you, and spectacular wildlife art and photographs that give you an up-close look at Virginia's incredible wildlife.

The Virginia Wildlife Calendar is a production of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and customers are reminded that the wildlife calendar starts in September 2006 and will run through December 2007. Quantities are limited and sales will run from July 15 through January 31, 2007, so don't wait. Order now!

The 2006-2007 Virginia Wildlife Calendars are \$10.00 each. Make check payable to: *Treasurer of Virginia* and send to Virginia Wildlife Calendar, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA. 23230-1104. If you would like to use your VISA or MasterCard you can order online at [www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov). **Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery.**

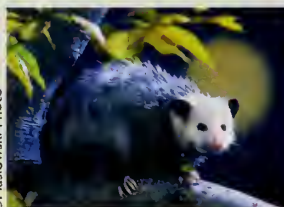


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